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COMMONWEAL



THE CRIME OF SILENCE

Mass-Murder in Vietnam?

Gordon C. Zahn

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DEBATE ON THE EUCHARIST

Gerard S. Sloyan

SARTRE VS. LÉVI-STRAUSS

Lionel Abel

NEO-ISOLATIONISM?

William Pfaff

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CORRESPONDENCE

Clerical Celibacy

Bloomington, Ind.

To the Editor: It is not clear—to me, at least—whether the “contradiction at bottom” that Mr. Dewart (Apr. 22) mentions is between “celibacy” and “priesthood” or between “celibacy” and “secular.”

Were celibacy optional, for priests, would those who choose it enter a “second-class priesthood”? Why? And, what about lay people who did not marry because the “right person” never came along? In which way would a celibacy *accepted* as the will of God prevent them from being fully “secular”?

I would say that a commitment to the redemption of the world is more the result of an interior attitude than anything else and that matrimony is not a foolproof method of making people realize and accept all the responsibilities they have as Christians.

A. MACÍAS
Indiana University

Priests' Union

Santa Monica, Calif.

To the Editors: Your reprint of Father John R. McCarthy's article in the *Steubenville Register* (“News and Views,” May 20) validates my assertion that the priests' union is a moderate and proven tool of reform in the Church. While many theologians, especially Protestant ones, call for more radical solutions, they rarely come up with practical ones. And we have to begin from where we are.

Because collective bargaining offers a *possible* solution to an evident problem, it becomes a necessary step to confronting other problems. Catholic writers especially have the tendency to demand complete solutions to begin with. There are no solutions to begin with; solutions appear as we work on things that might appear to have no solution.

Once we have some guaranteed security for priests, then we can address ourselves
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THE FRUITS OF FREEDOM

Even before the Council came to a close in 1965 there was a widespread recognition that the manner in which its work was interpreted afterwards would have much to do with the Church's effort to reform itself. This, of course, posed a problem for those charged with the actual wording of the decrees and declarations. On the one hand, they had to write in a fashion forceful enough to goad the Church toward reform. On the other, they had to achieve a delicate balance of the old and the new, the conservative and the progressive. Inevitably perhaps, they left the way open in many cases for the documents to be read in a variety of conflicting ways. Some bishops, for instance, clearly believe that the Council required them to establish diocesan councils and set about doing so; others, however, have chosen to ignore the Council's words on that point. Again, some theologians believe that the conciliar teaching on collegiality significantly altered the role of the bishops in relationship to the pope; others, however, believe that little has been changed.

The issue of divergent interpretations is hardly trivial. Writing in the current issue of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, Father Francis J. Connell states flatly that “The Declaration on Religious Liberty is concerned only with relations between *civil* authorities and individual citizens or religious groups.” His purpose is to counter any suggestion that the Declaration has implications for freedom in the Church. On the contrary, he declares, “the traditional doctrine on this point remains unchanged. . . . Strictly speaking, the Church has the right to inflict corporal punishments, such as fasting and even imprisonment, though she does not use such penalties today.” These last words would simply be funny but for the fact that they show how easily possible it is to ignore the revolutionary implications of the Declaration for Catholic freedom. It also points up how the continuing existence of a pre-conciliar set of canon laws can be invoked to undercut the spirit of the Council.

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A recent address by Archbishop John J. Krol of Philadelphia provides another example of the quixotic ways of reading documents. Quite accurately, he pointed out that the *Constitution on the Church* clearly upholds the authority of bishops. But he is exceedingly scant in his references to the fact that the *Constitution* also upholds the right of those subject to that authority to reveal their "needs and desires with that freedom and confidence which befits a son of God and a brother in Christ." Instead, he deliberately demeans some who are trying to do just this by saying that "Various inspired by eagerness for novelty, exaggerated self-confidence or illusions of prophetic charism, they preach their own views with little concern for being united with the living and common magisterium of the Church." Naturally, he offers no evidence for these charges, for unless the Archbishop is singularly gifted he could not possibly substantiate a charge which presumes the ability to read minds and hearts.

He also claims there are some who "have challenged the authority of bishops." On the contrary, the remarkable thing is that despite a host of silencings and suppressions of late, that authority has been upheld so firmly. But that is because the critics of the bishops see what some of the bishops themselves resolutely overlook: that to criticize authority is an important way of taking authority seriously. It is a way which, so it seems to us, is implicit in the *Constitution on the Church*.

There is, however, another way of looking at arguments of this kind. It is, perhaps, to be expected that bishops will be prone to see in conciliar documents mainly those elements and passages which stress their authority. It is no less predictable that their critics will find passages which seem to support their right to level criticisms. It will thus rarely be possible to decide the merits of particular disputes by recourse to conciliar texts.

But there remains another way. That is of asking what the practical fruits of the different interpretations amount to. So far, we believe, the fruits of outspoken criticism have shown their value. They were shown, first, in the Council itself. Had not many individuals in the Church spoken against abuses it is likely these abuses would not have been remedied. But the positive fruits are also shown, secondly, in the obviously heightened concern of great masses of Catholics that the Church produce in practice what it has claimed in theory: purity, holiness, witness. If one price for this concern is criticism, should not the bishops be willing to pay it? They could do worse.

BALAGUER WINS

Juan Bosch, who had said in a moment of brooding, "I want not to win this election," has been granted his wish. Against all predictions, Dominican voters have given the mandate to the right-of-center Juan Balaguer, a man who served 26 years under Trujillo, but who was,

according to the *New York Times*, "not tainted by the dictator's cruelty and corruption." The outcome, first of all, challenges the long-standing assumption among American liberals about what the Dominican people really want. It has been a commonplace to say that Bosch would win handily in any fair election.

Why Bosch failed is a mystery, and each man is entitled to his own musings. His supporters, here and in Dominica, speak of electoral fraud, intimidation, or a strife-weary deference to the "American candidate" simply to end turmoil and get foreign troops out of the country. There is an alternative explanation: that the longer Bosch was exposed to the glare of publicity, the less he looked like the answer to the problem. In what is supposed to have been President Kennedy's view, Arthur Schlesinger has written that for all his progressiveness, Bosch is "essentially a literary figure, better as a short story writer than as a statesman." His behavior since the 1963 coup that deposed him has often been puzzling and erratic. During the crucial spring and summer of 1965, when his appearance might have made a difference, he whiled away his time in Puerto Rico. In the recent campaign, he spoke frequently of the need for courage and vigor, but never once stepped outside his suburban villa for fear of assassination. When the vote was in, he poisoned the atmosphere by raising the specter of electoral fraud, apparently on no evidence at all, and despite the fact that a U.S. committee sympathetic to him, and headed by Norman Thomas, said that all indications were that the election was free and fair.

Nor are his mercurial tendencies merely matters for idle discussion. At times he spoke of accepting the results of a free election; at other times, of taking up arms if he lost. A loud cry of fraud could set the stage for the latter prediction and plunge Dominicans into another civil war. The test of Bosch's stability and devotion to democracy will be whether he allows his movement, which has argued loud and long for constitutionality and democratic procedures, to attempt an overthrow because the vote went the wrong way.

Bosch's anxieties are easy to understand. This is no Republican-Democrat election, founded on an inter-party consensus, in which the loser genially retires to try again next time. There is no consensus in Dominica, and its entire future is on the line. Whatever Bosch's impressive failings as a candidate, his fears that Balaguer will build a regime around the army and reactionary elements are fears that his country is losing its chance to have a meaningful reform without major bloodshed. We share some of these apprehensions about Balaguer's leadership. Nevertheless, Bosch's decision to run for office was an acceptance of the rules of the game: that the procedure is meaningless unless a candidate is willing to abide by the results. However dismal Balaguer appears, he must be given a chance if democracy is to succeed in the Dominican Republic. We hope that Bosch officially ac-

cepts the decision of the voters, as he has significantly declined to do, at this writing. We further hope that the Johnson Administration, which has a lot to atone for in the Dominican Republic, will use its influence to prod Balaguer toward the reforms which are urgently necessary, both in themselves, and to avert a civil war.

PEACE CANDIDATES

It was inevitable that the Vietnam war would be an issue in the 1966 Congressional elections, but for a while we weren't so sure. The issue fizzled earlier this year in the contest over New York Mayor Lindsay's vacant Congressional seat, when the "peace" candidate apparently suffered a failure of nerve and ended up the campaign with a position on the war hardly much different from that of the Administration's in one of its expansive moods. And recently in Oregon a peace candidate supported by Senator Morse showed poorly in a Democratic primary, though it seems the result was as much a matter of personality and local issues as it was an index of war sentiment. The most that can be said is that the election was inconclusive on the war issue.

Now California has entered the picture with 10 candidates running for Congress on the peace issue. All are Democrats and two of them are unopposed in the primary. The results of the voting will be known by the time this issue is published, but it is safe to say that how the peace candidates fare will not be explained away by side issues. On the other hand, their success, if it is that, will be gauged in part by the extreme difficulties they will have overcome. Dissent is never easy in wartime, and in regular party politics it is virtually unheard of.

Not surprisingly, the most interesting of these Congressional contests is in the Seventh District, which includes Berkeley. The incumbent is Jeffery Cohelan, a liberal Democrat with an excellent voting record and a growing reputation in House committee work. From all reports, he is a sort of ideal Congressman, which for

better or worse was typified in the movie "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." But there the comparison ends, at least for Mr. Cohelan, who spoke of his current primary contest as a "Greek tragedy" which "must play itself out," with himself as the center. Mr. Cohelan is a former Fulbright scholar and university professor, and we imagine he raises the tone of the House considerably.

His opponent is Robert Scheer, Foreign Editor of *Ramparts* magazine and the author of a fairly explosive report for the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Santa Barbara on the origins of U.S. support for the late President Diem. Mr. Scheer is for withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam. Given the vicissitudes of the campaign, his position against the war has remained fairly firm, and he has accomplished the feat of keeping the support of both the California Democratic Council, a liberal but regular party organization, and the young radicals from Berkeley who supply the needed campaign workers. Mr. Cohelan's support comes primarily from labor and minority groups, such as the Negroes, who can still be delivered by the party professionals.

The irony, and no doubt the tragedy for Mr. Cohelan, is that during this Congress he has been among those most strongly identified with the peace issue. He was a leading member of a group of liberal Congressmen who petitioned President Johnson to continue the "peace offensive." However, he has not broken with the Administration over the war. He is far from making the nuisance of himself that Senators Morse and Gruening have, and apparently that his opponents in the primary would wish the Seventh District representative to be.

When the primary has played itself out, most observers predict a rosy-fingered dawn for Mr. Cohelan. But if the showing of Scheer and his fellow peace candidates is fairly good, again judged by the difficulties of their dissent, it cannot help ignite Congressmen like Cohelan to something more formidable than Presidential petitions. The challenge is not the whole thing in electoral politics, but it may prove an important factor in bringing about a solution to the Vietnam war.



FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEO-ISOLATIONISM?

The debate on foreign policy needed in the United States today is a much more fundamental one than the debate on Vietnam we already have. Vietnam is important, certainly, but the American involvement there is a result of assumptions about the purpose and competence of our international policy that must be reappraised if we are to avoid future "Vietnams"—future frustrations, humiliations, or defeats elsewhere—and, perhaps, an ultimate futility.

The present debate got off to a bad start when the challenge to existing policy was described as "neo-isolationism." The controversy became in considerable measure an exchange of accusations between those who asserted that the Johnson Administration wanted to be policeman to the world, or a global counter-revolutionary, and defenders of present policy who accused the critics of wanting to "cut and run," to quit, to withdraw to the unrealistic security of the North American continent,

supposedly abandoning the rest of the world to Communism—to Chinese Communism at that.

This kind of controversy has not proved very illuminating because it hits only obliquely, if at all, on the question of proper goals for foreign policy and on the underlying American national assumptions and expectations about foreign affairs. Yet without examining those issues we are unlikely to see any fundamental change in our situation. In Vietnam or out, America will still be in trouble if our beliefs about the meaning of Asian revolution, of Communism in China and Russia, of the American world mission and its prospects of success, remain what they seem to be today.

What are our avowed goals? The high officials of the Johnson Administration and Mr. Johnson himself ordinarily give public expression to their beliefs in the Wilsonian language of creating a "new world order." Mr. Rusk says that our goal is an international society made up of governments established on the Jeffersonian principle of just powers derived from the consent of the governed, cooperating with one another under the UN Charter to suppress aggression and establish the rule of law. Our goal is "a world in which human rights are secure, a world of better life for all." According to Vice President Humphrey, it is "a world civilization in which both persons and nations find their individuality enhanced, . . . a peaceful revolution against world poverty and the chaos which follows from it, . . . a progressive international community based in common interest." Mr. Johnson declares that the source of disorder in today's world is the gulf between poor and rich; America's objective is to open for the world "the gates of opportunity . . . into a brighter land."

Commitment or Rhetoric?

Statements of this kind can be quoted almost without number. Do they mean what they seem to mean—a considered American commitment to creating a new international society liberated from conflict and poverty, and a considered American conviction that poverty is the prime source of conflict in the world? Or are they a kind of sentimental rhetoric identifying America's affluence with its political successes, expressing aspirations that all would like to see fulfilled but do not seriously expect—a rhetoric inherited, in the second case, from Wilson, but without the Wilsonian substance of serious policy and belief? The latter undoubtedly is closer to the truth, although there surely is little or no conscious cynicism in contemporary Washington's use of the language of historical redemption and war to end war. But this poses a major problem: If a Wilsonian new world order is not in fact a serious, attainable, politically realistic objective of American policy, what are our real objectives—and what is the significance of this indulgence in the language of a belief we do not seriously profess?

My own feeling is that for many if not most of the professional American foreign policy community, a commitment to pragmatic and practical action in international politics—the defense of American interests, the strengthening of international conventions and precedents that serve our interests, the checking of our enemies—is crucially but uneasily related to ultimate objectives of the Wilsonian sort. And this larger commitment is one which these men shrink from analyzing too closely out of an acknowledgment that it does not bear analysis. Their commitment is a secular act of faith, motivated by an emotional rather than an intellectual conviction that a new world order *must* be attainable, with conflict resolved and reason vindicated in the affairs of men, in order to make our present involvements and sufferings worthwhile. America did not give up isolation merely to become one more nation like all the others, immersed in "power politics," moral compromise and contradiction.

And it seems to me that what we have here is a transmutation of the old American isolationism. International involvement is a provisional commitment for these Americans. It is a conditional commitment, and the condition is that our international involvement must bring about a new kind of world liberated from the flux and compromise which has been the condition of political life in history. The old isolationist wanted America to stand apart from the tainted and selfish affairs of international life. The new isolationist accepts our involvement—we were drawn into it by war and crisis—but carries it out with an uneasy zeal for a "victory" that can justify the compromising involvement. The victory that is sought is not so much a victory over Communism as a victory over the past and present fate of men in political society.

Our world role, Wilson once declared, came about "by no plan of our conceiving, but by the hand of God who led us into this way . . . America shall in truth show the way." This role of ours, Under Secretary of State George Ball declares, "is something new and unique in history." Its objective, Secretary Rusk says "is victory for all mankind . . . a worldwide victory for freedom." The words are the words of involvement and commitment. The spirit, though, is the spirit of national separateness and mission, the spirit of isolation—of a moral isolationism that would remake a world and a history which no longer can be escaped.

But power and naiveté are a bad combination, and power employed in the service of assumptions which those who hold them do not quite dare to analyze is simple irresponsibility. The indictment to be made of America in the foreign policy debate of summer 1966 is not that this country is reactionary or imperialist or arrogant—consciously it is none of these. The indictment is that America is unserious. We practice programs of action and intervention that rest on the unadmitted emotions and instincts of American national isolationism.

WILLIAM PFAFF

A HARLEM CHILDHOOD

THE CRIME OF SILENCE



Are we accomplices in mass-murder in Vietnam?

GORDON C. ZAHN



My thesis simply stated is this: our government is making murderers of us all. This is not to be passed off as a "shock opening," a rhetorical device to win the attention of the reader. On the contrary, it is a deliberate and saddening conclusion to which I have been forced by my personal interpretation of current events. As each day passes with its new quota of injustice and atrocity, one thing becomes ever clearer. We are accomplices, before and after the fact, some of us by direct participation, the rest of us by our silent acquiescence.

This is not just a personal judgment reached by me and the rest of the dissident few in our midst who are trying to register some effective protest. My observations and discussions in England and elsewhere in Europe have revealed it as a widespread opinion and one that is gaining in intensity with each new escalation of the conflict in Vietnam. We cannot ignore it when a prominent German liberal writer demands publicly that American politicians and generals be brought before a new international tribunal to face charges of violating the standards we ourselves proclaimed at Nuremberg. Nor should we be too quick to pass this off as some fanatically extreme (or even "Communist-inspired") opinion. There *are* war criminals in our midst, and what is far worse, we know of them and their deeds—and close our eyes to them.

For example, some of these criminals were shown on Chicago television not too long ago in a film documentary prepared by the Canadian Broadcasting System. One memorable sequence concerned an act that, to say the least, was a clear violation of the Geneva conventions. A Vietcong captive was stretched out on the ground with one

of his captors kneeling on his groin while another poured hatfuls of water down the victim's nostrils. When the unfortunate captive finally died—still "on camera," mind you—his body was unceremoniously kicked aside into a ditch. It is hard to decide which was worse: the disgusting deed itself or the picture of the others who stood around (Americans included, needless to say) looking quite pleased, even entertained, by the gruesome proceedings.

The same program went on to feature an American pilot filmed in the process of completing a "successful" bombing mission. One had to see and hear this to catch the excitement and jubilation in the pilot's voice as he described the splendor of the hits and the panic of the villagers scurrying for their lives while he looked down on them from above. It took me back to the Thirties for a moment, recollecting the horrified gasp with which most Americans greeted that Italian pilot who spoke of the "beauty" he found in the mixture of bombs, blood and flame that reminded him of "flowers" bursting into bloom as he ran his missions against the helpless Ethiopians. (One might even say the Italian must be given the better of the comparison: his was an ecstasy born of aesthetic appreciation; our countryman's delight stressed the technical perfection and sheer efficiency of his operation.)

The case does not rest on a single television documentary, however. Our national press has provided detailed descriptions of innumerable other instances of similar behavior—served to us, replete with photographs in many cases—with our breakfast coffee. Sometimes the atrocities are committed by our own men; more often by the allies for whose actions we must take full responsibility, since it is our support and encouragement that makes those actions possible. If, as it has been charged,

GORDON C. ZAHN is the author of *German Catholics and Hitler's Wars*.

Oradour and Lidice are today villages in Vietnam, these crimes against humanity must be on our consciences; and we should insist that those immediately responsible for them must someday be brought to judgment.

In a special sense, all of this involves us not only as Americans but as Christians and Catholics. In view of all the writing I have done about the failure of German Catholics to effectively oppose the intrinsically evil policies and programs of the Nazi regime, it would be neither possible nor permissible for me to ignore the inescapable parallels which find American Catholics and their spiritual leaders remaining silent before the fact of the misdeeds being committed today by our nation and its allies. Indeed, not only is it a matter of failure to speak the word of protest that is so desperately needed; Catholic opinion, where it is registered, seems to favor an extension of those same policies which have led to the crimes described.

We have, for instance, the recent report of the shocking (but not at all surprising!) results of a national poll in which more than 60 percent of the Catholic respondents favored the use of "whatever added force is necessary to win." Read that carefully: *whatever added force is necessary!* I would like to think that these Catholics really did not mean what they said (nuclear bombing, perhaps? a "Final Solution" exterminating all suspected of Vietcong sympathies?). Unfortunately, I am pessimistic enough to believe they did, and my pessimism is not at all lessened by the appeal by one of our leading Catholic "experts" in international affairs that we revise our traditional moral teaching on war to permit the intentional killing of innocents!

Catholics today are appalled by the flagrant nationalism in the statements of Military Bishop Rarkowski during the Nazi period. But what are we to make of the statements of our own military bishop who seems to have gone beyond even those extremes? At least Bishop Rarkowski couched his enthusiasm for Nazi Germany's war effort in his apparently sincere, however deluded we might think it to be, conviction that Hitler's wars were just wars. Cardinal Spellman, however, has reportedly embraced Decatur's dictum that, right *or wrong*, the nation's cause is to be supported. (And what is perhaps more scandalous than the Cardinal's statement is the fact that our more distinguished journals of Catholic opinion have let it pass without comment.)

The Way the War Is Fought

The justice or injustice of the war in Vietnam is not the central issue in this article, however. I have made it sufficiently clear elsewhere—and will undoubtedly find other occasions for doing so—that I do consider this a patently unjust war. But I am concerned here with something quite different: the acts and policies associated with the prosecution of the war which ought to be con-

demned by every Christian, even those—*especially* those—who do not share my over-all rejection of the war itself.

Nor can this be read as justifying or "forgiving" the crimes committed by those on the other side. Murder and terrorism are to be condemned outright and unequivocally, irrespective of who may be employing them or for what purpose. It is quite irrelevant, too, whether the National Liberation Front assassinations of village officials be numbered in the tens, the hundreds, or the thousands—just as irrelevant as that senseless debate as to whether the Nazis exterminated six million Jews or "only" one million. The willful murder of even one man (whether by Nazi, Vietcong, South Vietnamese, or American "advisor") is a crime and deserves unhesitating condemnation as such. But of course, *our* primary responsibility is still the crimes committed by *our* men and *our* allies, and it is with these that this article is concerned.

Unless and until a massive Christian protest is voiced, that responsibility will not be met. There is little hope that improvement will originate with the national Administration. President Johnson shows little or no concern that his most consistent and enthusiastic support is coming from those very persons and groups who opposed him at the last election. In fact, he seems to rejoice in this as a manifestation of some kind of national "consensus," conveniently overlooking the fact that he has lost the support of many who helped elect him. There is much justice to the cynical observation that, as long as we have the Goldwater policy, we might just as well have taken the man. If nothing else, that policy would have been presented in the blunt candor that distinguishes its author's public posture and not smothered, as each new escalation has been, in the sickening syrup of pietistic self-righteousness.

One might hope that more of our Catholics in the national legislature would be exerting their influence to assure a fuller recognition of, and respect for, the essential demands of morality; but, here again, the pattern seems to be that of an uncritical acceptance of whatever policy the State Department and the generals present as "necessary." We can take great pride in the outstanding exceptions to this, men like Senators Kennedy and McCarthy to mention only two, but the sad fact remains that the more consistent and certainly the most outspoken opposition to the nation's involvement in Vietnam have come from men who are not of our faith.

Perhaps we cannot be too critical of our Catholic politicians on this score. The same pattern of unconcern and disregard has marked the actions (or, to be more accurate, the *absence* of any action) on the part of the hierarchy itself. Pope Paul (and John XXIII before him) might as well have been speaking as a Moslem leader if we are to judge by the echo his consistent appeals of peace and peace action have received from the spiritual spokesmen for the American Catholic flock.

That scandalous eagerness on the part of those *Register* Catholics to embrace "whatever added force is needed to win" can be traced in large part to the failure of our bishops to provide any moral guidance or direction on this crucial moral issue. *Refusal* is probably a more accurate word than "failure" in this context, as the editors of *Continuum* and *The National Catholic Reporter* discovered in their futile effort to get the bishops to take a stand, or even to express an opinion, on some of the more pressing moral aspects of the war. One watches with great interest to see how Dr. O'Brien's comments on the question of intentional killing of innocents will be greeted by bishops who so recently participated in the quite contrary decision reached by the Fathers of Vatican II.

No one is insisting upon an official condemnation of the war or formal anathemas directed against those who take part in it. This would not, and should not, be the role of the bishop in this era of the emergent layman. Protest in the bishop's own name would be enough; less than that, however, is a scandal. When murder and torture become an everyday item in the newspapers and when they are done in fulfillment of a national policy or even only "excused" in the light of that policy, silence is worse than a scandal. It becomes a crime.

One can understand the hesitancy on the part of a bishop who finds it difficult to suggest to the men of his flock who have been called into service (and to the families they left behind!) that perhaps they should not be there, that they should certainly not be doing what they are doing there. We can also make allowance for the fact that our bishops, like the rest of us, are susceptible to considerations of national pride and patriotic attachment that make it difficult to take the true measure of our nation's acts.

But to recognize these factors is not to justify the silence, any more than these same factors can be used to justify the support given by German bishops to Hitler's war effort. When whole villages, inhabitants and all, are covered with a blanket of napalm merely because there is a *suspicion* that they *may* harbor the Vietcong, there can no longer be any comfortable shelter for the Christian under the principle of the double effect or any of the other loopholes we so conveniently read into the traditional "just war" morality. The weapons we are using in Vietnam and the targets we have chosen (not to mention those additional targets already being discussed as the next stage of escalation!), and all the other "irregularities" that occur with diabolical regularity—these have stripped off the disguises and nullified the qualifications so that murder stands revealed as murder.

It should not be left to a small, but happily growing, minority of Catholic priests and laymen to try to redeem the day for the Church in America in much the same manner as that even smaller handful of German Catholics who dared to resist the Nazi power. Our spiritual

leaders have far less to justify their silence: no Gestapo is likely to be pounding on their doors or dragging their priests off to concentration camps. At least not yet.

There will be some to say that I have put too much stress on the German parallels, and perhaps I have. In quantity and essential quality, the American atrocities in Vietnam fall far short of the crimes perpetrated by the Third Reich. But the parallels are there, and they are growing more insistent. Note, if you will, the developing "cult of the green beret" (with its equivalent of the *Horst Wessel* song and all!). I would suggest that there are great similarities here to the adulation lavished upon the S.S. and S.A. "elite" corps in their day, to say nothing of the similarity in the "special services" they performed.

The parallels should be recognized for what they are, and this recognition should force all of us to re-examine and re-evaluate the nation's policies and our inescapable share of the responsibility for those policies and their consequences. The blood of innocents is already upon our hands. The longer we tolerate these things in silence, the greater will be the blot upon our national honor and the burden of sin upon our individual souls.



SISTER M. THÉRÈSE

SPACE FLIGHT

In distinguishing being's *res* from *modus*
the professor pushed metaphysics
to its uttermost palings to sally
with Augustine's text (speaking of God)
intimior intime meo
"More inward to myself than I am"

and we were off in space. "What is so yours
as you," he asked, "and what so little
yours as that (you) which belongs to another?"
The air was heady but we kept on
course—till he spun us off
trajectory with "God is more you

than you." That flew us loose as a wedge of geese
that had lost the skein of summer. But
the scholar, safe poised in his sky of the
proportional analogue, righted
our intellectual craft
with one bright breath: "Slip being out of

finite mode and fold it in the infinite—
its top analogate." At that we
took in sun and, turned toward being's apogee,
for one wild moment of insight soared
into that inviolable
zone where we are because He is.

DEBATE ON THE EUCHARIST



GERARD S. SLOYAN

When Catholics read *Mysterium Fidei* early last September, or newspaper summaries of its content, they could only have had the impression that Pope Paul was taking a position somewhat counter to that of his brother bishops in their Council document, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. It seemed to neutralize the Council Fathers' major concern for the restoration of Mass as the commemorative celebration in Christian communities of "the mystery of faith" by simply redefining it as the prayer of the Church whenever it was validly offered by a priest.

Since the latter truth had not been called in question in any circles American Catholics travel in, many wondered why the Pope had bothered to reaffirm it. Neither had Catholics been heard maintaining that the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist were such only at the moment of their being eaten, another position reprobated in the encyclical. Denial of the first proposition and affirmation of the second would comprise heresy. It is always helpful to have errors in faith delineated, but it is puzzling to have them warned against when they are not being held by anyone one can name. The puzzlement was heightened because the Pope seemed to be hinting at heresy from the standpoint of those Catholics who were not receiving instruction in the solid eucharistic theology of Vatican II. Any who were prone to associate the eucharistic theology of the *Constitution* with unsound doctrine seemed to be receiving all the aid and comfort they needed, and from the highest source. The Council document received verbal praise in the encyclical, even to a repetition of the various modes of presence of Christ in the Mass, but there seemed to be wanting a deep understanding of its over-all intent.

So things stood by the middle of September. The non-Catholic observers at the Council reconvened convinced that the Pope had set back the cause of ecumenism seriously, not by reaffirming Christ's real presence in the Eucharist but by once again making the term "transubstantiation" a condition of faith in this mystery. In fact, the encyclical reiterates this word from Trent which had spoken of it as "*convenienter et proprie; aptissime*" (correctly, very fittingly) descriptive of the mysterious

change of elements (Sess. 13 ch. 4; also can. 1). The question it does not address itself to is the very one at issue, namely whether this term commits the Roman Catholic Church to a particular philosophical position in its adherence to a New Testament mystery. And if it does not, well-disposed Protestants and Orthodox asked, what is the ecumenical good sense of retaining the term when it is so widely thought (by Protestants and Catholics alike) to make a development in Aristotelian theory the substance of faith?

Immediately upon the appearance of the Pope's encyclical the Dutch bishops, through Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., Cardinal Alfrink's Council *peritus*, stated that none of the Dutch theologians whose names had appeared in press reports could be among those under the encyclical's censure. These would include Piet Schoonenberg, S.J. and Luchesius Smits, O.F.M. Cap., both of whom, said the statement, repudiate in their writings the positions repudiated by the papal utterance. It was pointed out on the same occasion that since the Pope had acknowledged with approval a pastoral letter of the Dutch bishops of last May which censured certain imprecise pastoral teaching and practice on the Eucharist, no rebuke of Dutch Catholicity was to be entertained. In fact, however, a Dutch translation of the encyclical was made available by the Vatican, an unusual move.

With the passage of the autumn months it became clearer why the Pope had warned in a Church-wide statement against errors which few in the Church had heard of. In a word, he feared that the hearers were by no means few. The Catholic press in certain countries and large circulation media like *Time* (July 2, 1965) had evidently contributed to the spread of views which needed arresting by the drastic measure of an encyclical. Chief among them was the idea that the consecrated species at Mass were not themselves the body and blood of Christ but only a sign of them; that in the context of a meal Christ is "encountered" but not in fact eaten; that He is present "to" the bread and wine but not precisely under their appearances; and that because Jesus Christ comes in the sign of a meal, He is not to be addressed in contemplative prayer or gazed upon in the form of bread.

The Pope was most emphatic that the Church's faith in the Eucharist was a faith in transubstantiation. No term is needed to improve on this one, though the intent be-

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hind the use of others was allowed. Rejection of the idea it stands for is to be attributed to weak faith in the almighty power of God. Finally, the Pope indicated that he could not conceive of a priest who would not wish to celebrate the Eucharist daily (be himself a celebrant seems to have been his meaning, though this is not said in so many words).

Devotion to the Eucharist

Now all these ideas need to be much discussed and preached on if waning faith in the chief Christian sacrament is to be avoided. The whole purpose of the liturgical renewal is to increase devotion to the Eucharist. If the Church is experiencing a great numerical growth in the reception of this sacrament but no corresponding intensification of adherence to the person of Christ, that fact needs looking into. Perhaps increased commitment to His person is being achieved through the Eucharist, but at the price of unconcern for His real presence *sub specie panis et vini*.

Are visits to the Blessed Sacrament "falling off"? If so, is it because they are being actively discouraged or at least not encouraged? What is the fate of the Forty Hours Devotion, all-day exposition, nocturnal adoration? Do these practices languish while the celebration of the Mass flourishes? If this is true, is it by way of a cause and effect relation? Eucharistic devotions apart from the Mass suffered no diminishment during the period 1910-1960 when the Jansenist threat of infrequent communion was being overcome. Yet the liturgical movement seems to be doing them real violence. Is this happening on any principle, or are quite other factors at work?

Many of the above matters are unresolved questions of fact. Once the importance of answering them is established the ordinary techniques of sociological inquiry can be employed. First, however, it should be ascertained, in accord with principles of sacramental theology and the history of piety, which of them are worth seeking an answer to and which not. While all questions touching sacramental life are supremely important, not every expression of sacramental piety is of the same importance as every other.

The sacrament of the Eucharist derives from the New Testament, where it is described as organically continuous with the worship behavior of the Old. Yahweh, God of Israel, and this people were anciently in a historical covenantal relation. The covenant was a personal, contractual arrangement whereby He unilaterally initiated unlimited benefits for them if they would be faithful to Him. Manna ("bread from heaven") was the sign of His beneficence at one important point in the history of this people. At another, the covenant He made with them was sealed with the blood of heifers and goats, blood being the sign of life and fidelity.

Israel was no stranger to the universal religious custom

of the sacred meal. Its chief expression was as a remembrance rite of Yahweh's bringing the people Israel to birth in the desert (the "Passover" rite). When Jesus identified His impending death and resurrection as basically an act of covenant renewal (a "new covenant in my blood") He did so in the context of a sacred meal. It was to be a memorial (*zikkaron*, *anámnesis*) which, when eaten, would bring Him into the midst of His brothers as one freely offered to His Father.

The New Testament tradition other than that of the gospels is that this meal was taken commonly from earliest times. Two separate traditions on it were early fused, or it may be that the two chief aspects of the one mystery were discovered: the joyous recall of the Lord's resurrection whereby He continues to be present in the midst of the community, and the commemoration of His painful sufferings and death. From the time of the first Pauline churches the two notions are found in conjunction. St. Paul considers it necessary, however, to separate a Christ-commemorative meal of fellowship (*agapē*) from the strictly sacramental rite in bread and wine. The latter sacrament stands out in the New Testament as the epitome of new life in Christ. An early liturgical formula inserts the words "mystery of faith" in Jesus' words of institution over the cup. The indisputable testimony of the post-apostolic and patristic periods is that the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is unique among His various sacramental presences. He works *through* the sign of water in baptism, *through* oil in healing the sick; He is *in*, or Himself *is*, the sign of bread and wine in the Eucharist. After the priest's consecratory word in anaphora or canon the food and drink is no longer ordinary but is reckoned as the Lord's true body and blood. No other tradition can be called authentic.



Early modes of speech about the Eucharist are not personal. The species are not spoken of as "He" but "it." The sacred food is a "type," a "figure" of Christ; the sacrament is denominated the "holy bread," the "cup of salvation," a usage retained in the Roman rite of the Mass. Still, there is no doubt that the foodstuffs are, in fact, the body and blood of the Lord. The Greek Fathers speak of changed elements (*metastochéiosis*) and the Latins just as firmly of complete change (*conversio*). What had been bread and wine is now the Savior, to be

eaten in a remembrance rite. This food will achieve salvation for the believer who accepts in love the power of the cross and the risen life.

With the early transition in the Church from a predominantly Jewish to a Gentile membership the primitive New Testament notion of a sacred meal sacrificial in itself underwent modification. Instead of the biblical emphasis on the meal as the essence of the rite, the Greek and Roman religious backgrounds tended to place the center of gravity in the offering or up-bearing which preceded the meal. The American theologian Kilmartin has lately shown how the classic liturgies of Byzantium and Rome not only had this characteristic but also discouraged communicating through their stress (basically that of Ambrose, Augustine, and Chrysostom) on the awesome majesty of Christ who was not to be approached lightly.

After the patristic age there came in the eighth through eleventh centuries an emphasis on Christ's physical real presence in the Eucharist which was quite foreign to the New Testament, the liturgies, and the Fathers. Popular teachers pointed out that with one's teeth one touched the arms and legs of Christ which had been racked on the cross. Berengarius, a priest who lived through most of the eleventh century, distinguished himself as the "first heretic of the Eucharist" by resisting this kind of thing. He was made to sign a formulary drafted by a Roman synod in 1078—he subsequently recanted, then recanted the recantation—which St. Bonaventure did not hesitate to brand excessive. St. Thomas Aquinas interpreted the papal document in a more reverent spirit, then proceeded to alter its meaning substantially.

These two thinkers of the high scholastic period (and to them should be added St. Albert the Great) were busy restoring to the Eucharist the spiritual sense it had traditionally enjoyed and divesting it of the excessive realism of a physical interpretation. "Sacraments belong to the *genus* of sign," wrote St. Thomas. He declared that Christ was present in the Eucharist, "not in his proper appearance but under the appearances of this sacrament." Of the numerous bleeding hosts of his day he wrote in his theological *Summa*: "What this miraculous blood might be I know not; in any event it is not the real blood of Christ."

Popular Excesses

In their eucharistic teaching the reformers were reacting not to this genuine New Testament sacramentality but to the excesses of popular piety. Recall that the desire to receive the Lord's body at Mass had so waned by the year 1215 that the IV Lateran Council decreed the necessity of communicating once each year. The non-involvement of congregations in the liturgy had played a large part in this decline. A rite that was conceived as a sacrifice complete in itself and not as a meal came to be dealt with as such. Other benefits than nourishment began

to be looked for from Christ's body really present. Chief among these advantages was the healing power to be gained from looking on the Lord's body.

It is true that adoration was the motive that led to the elevations at Mass, to the Corpus Christi procession, and to benediction with the sacred host, but the Eucharist was adored with a view to the benefits to be derived from gazing. It cannot be put too strongly that whereas reservation of the Sacrament is an ancient practice (for the sick, for communicating at home, for exchange among bishops) the various devotions in the West which center around reservation flourished as substitutes for celebrating the rite of the Mass fully, including receiving communion. This means that, *a priori*, we should not be surprised if a return to a New Testament view of this sacrament were to modify certain developments which are without a biblical history. Needless to say, a weakened faith in Christ's eucharistic presence would not be a necessary part of any such modification of practice.

The Reformers, as is well known, began by attacking eucharistic abuses. They opposed the use of the Sacrament as a talisman and very shortly found themselves describing adoration of it as the idolatry of a bit of bread. They wanted its primitive meal character restored and were soon holding that there could be no eucharistic reality apart from the meal. Most importantly, they so insisted on the uniqueness of Christ's sacrifice in the real order of history that they came to deny its authenticity in the real order of sign. They meant to deny that repetition in the order of historical reality was possible but they ended by denying sacramental reality as well. Not having been made sufficiently at home by Catholic teachers with a spiritual presence in sign, in which the sign of the Eucharist was mysteriously the reality signified, Christ himself, they concluded to other symbolisms.

The element common to all of these was that the command of the Savior to eat His flesh and drink His blood was fulfilled by celebrating a meal in which His spiritual presence was achieved through recall of His person and His deed. At times a rational spirit may have been at work—a real skepticism with respect to the data of the senses. In the main, however, there was no lack of faith among the Reformers in God's almighty power. They were simply convinced that He had not expressed it in the way the Catholics claimed. The Catholics, in turn, were defenseless through their failure to have taught well the sacramentality of the New Testament which was their heritage. The "realism" threat to Catholic sacramental doctrine was persistent. Moreover, the failure of Trent to initiate any serious liturgical reform—vernacular tongues, rite, Eucharist under two species—was a serious handicap. The Tridentine settlement left Catholics with a firm grasp on one real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, His presence under the species, but no sound appreciation of the further, fuller presence of Christ to Christians which the Reformers were so intent on.

It is these additional presences of Christ which are at the heart of the modern controversy. The primitive Church was quite clear that the Savior had left behind Him a memorial meal as a way to be in the midst of His brothers. Meals can be highly satisfying human experiences which create a real unity among those who partake of them. For the Church, the chief effect of the Eucharist (and therefore its chief purpose) was the knitting together of the community in love. Christ was present as host and as food, but also as guest in the person of those who partook.

When this earliest view of the Eucharist had become obscured, Aquinas led in its restoration. As part of his overall concern with the true nature of sacraments, he distinguished among three elements in the Eucharist: the "sign only" (the consecrated foodstuffs), "the reality and the sign" (Christ really present under appearances), and the "reality only" (the unity of the Church). The last named reality is the ultimate one, the very reason why Christ becomes available in the sign of food. As Catholic piety customarily puts it, He is on our tongues so as to be in our hearts. Christ's real presence as food achieves the purpose intended only when He is present to the believer as one person is to another. His personal presence to many individuals is, in effect, the making of the Church. This holy assembly becomes one through a common faith in Christ crucified and risen who continues to be in its midst through His presence in this sign.

The truth of the ultimate reality of Christ's presence was retained by the Reformers at the price of His proximate presence in the sign. The Fathers of Trent repudiated belief in His presence "in sign and figure only." The unfortunate side effect of this testimony to the ancient eucharistic faith was a new Catholic distrust in symbolism, the very essence of sacramental reality. Only in this century did theologians like Beauduin, Casel, and Masure begin to restore the balance. The German monk Vonier (of Buckfast Abbey, England) was the successful popularizer of Aquinas' eucharistic teaching, while in this country H. A. Reinhold was the chief informant on a wide scale of the progress being made in European Catholic sacramental thought. The restoration of these partially forgotten truths about the nature of sacraments culminated in the spelling out in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of the multiple presences of Christ in the Mass.

He is present there, say the Council Fathers, in the person of the celebrant, in His word (hence in the reader and the homilist as well as in the Scriptures), under the sacramental species, in the prayers and songs of the rite, and in His brothers who celebrate. This being so, one correctly deduces that Christ is equally present in all Masses only in terms of one of the five real presences listed. The measure of His presence through the remaining four modes will establish the measure in which Christ, really present after the consecratory prayer, will be present to

individuals and to the congregation. How well He reads and preaches and celebrates and sings, through His ministers and people, will determine how much He is received once He offers Himself in host and chalice.

Two Sides

This Catholic faith in the multiple real presences of Christ, newly recalled, is doubtless the cause of the tensions which led to the encyclical. Ranged on two sides are those who have never considered any eucharistic presence of Christ besides that of His really "being there" and those who are so convinced of the reasons why He is there that they tend to stress the Eucharist as a means to this end, not an end in itself. But an adorable divine Person considered in any way *but* as an end is a scandal to many—again, the result of the imperfect catechizing they have received in the mystery of the redemption.

Dr. Schillebeeckx gave a highly illuminating conference on the subject at the *Domus Mariae* in Rome on November 9, 1965. It was based on a two-part article of his in *Tijdschrift voor Theologie*, the first of which (on the meaning of "transubstantiation" at Trent) had already appeared, the second of which (on the ideas underlying the proposed terms "transignification" and "transfinalization" and their relation to Tridentine doctrine) had not. This talk was subsequently made available in



mimeographed form by the Dutch Documentation Centre of the Council (DO-C). It merited the unusual attention of a disclaimer by Archbishop Felici on the Council floor of any "official" character of the talks being given there. A lecture was also delivered at the Gregorian University on December 1 by its English professor, Dr. Francis Clarke, S.J., on "The Real Presence." It was sponsored by the Cardinal of Westminster, again an unusual move by Roman standards during the Council.

Schillebeeckx reviewed a controversy of the last fifteen years between Professors Selvaggi, S.J., of the Gregorian University and the now Archbishop Colombo of Milano, in which the former held to a "physicism" which seemed to connote chemical change in the eucharistic elements while the latter held for an "ontological" change. Schillebeeckx further explored the phenomenological character of modern philosophy, opposed alike to any Aristotelian

nature theory and the "gnoseological" orientation of even the best of Scholastic sacramentality. In this latter view the chief characteristic of signs is that they convey knowledge of the thing signified rather than transmit something of its whole being. The philosophies of personalism and phenomenology together also demand a more apt expression of the mystery of the Eucharist than Aristotle's metaphysics can supply.

At this point the Flemish Dominican recorded his conviction that the word "transubstantiation"—first used between 1100 and 1130—meant simply *conversio* or *trans-elementatio*, that is, complete change. In that primitive sense it expresses faith in the New Testament reality. By the time of Trent most of the Fathers probably thought that the philosophical teaching on substance and accident was implicated. Their ignorance on this point would not prohibit the term's having its more general significance, however.

Ontological Change

Schillebeeckx observed that in the debates which preceded the vote of Session 13 of Trent some bishops observed that the term was at the same time "learned and barbarous." In any case, the reality of the eucharistic mystery is a change in the bread and wine that is total while at the same time nothing experiential to sense is changed. He calls this change "ontological" because it affects the food-turned-person in the depths of its being. The change may legitimately be called "transfinalization" or "transignification," he said, terms which the Pope's encyclical allows. In the first case the purpose (*finis*) of bread and wine had originally been to nourish physically. Now it is to put the recipient in personal contact with Christ through His new presence. In the second, the bread and wine signified ordinary eating, the strength it gave, and the fellowship of a meal. After the change it stands for the glorified Christ, now present, and the new life which accepting Him in faith gives.

"Transubstantiation," however, seems to give a better assurance of Catholic faith than the other two terms because the notion of "total ontological change" appears to be built into it. When the terms "transfinalization" and "transignification" are used, the end and the significance of the consecrated species can be thought of as changed by way of extrinsic reference only.

In fact, however, the case has been made by Catholic theologians that the profound ontological change required by Catholic faith consists precisely in the new transcendental reference of the species. To say that because the change has already occurred the food and drink have a new end or significance is temporarily comforting. The question is, has anything really been said? Rather, has not as much been said by the affirmation that neither bread nor wine is what it was because the prayer of the Church has changed its purpose, its signification, utterly?

There is nothing about the change that sense can know. What is on the altar is now Christ's body and blood. It is such really sacramentally, not naturally or physically. That is to say, His real physical body is signified by this symbol which makes Him present.

The question of the new eucharistic theologians is, can not the total ontological or intrinsic change demanded by Catholic faith be accomplished by putting the admittedly unchanged species in a totally new relation to the heavenly body of Christ? That at least this much happens is certain in Catholic faith. The problem is, will it not suffice as the reality of the *transubstantiatio* of defined Catholic faith and even express the mystery better? It may sound as if in such a theory "the bread and wine remain." By no means. Their appearances remain. What is there, in virtue of sign, is another reality: Jesus Christ.

It hardly seems fair for those who have a philosophical theory on substance which covers the data to their satisfaction ("the substance of His body is present") to claim the stronger or the purer faith. Catholic faith, after all, is: "Jesus Christ is present where formerly there had been bread and wine. The change is total: *transubstantiatio* describes it fittingly enough."

Some unguarded things have evidently been written and said in the last few years in popular sources. Such is the testimony of the Pope. Schillebeeckx bears him out, quoting, however, only one phrase of Smits which was rectified between its periodical and book forms. The impression was given through the use of analogies, it seems, that the eucharistic meal was like any meal in which a host became better known to his guests in the sign of the food he lovingly prepared. The analogy is extraordinarily weak for the Eucharist unless it stresses the unique presence in all human experience of Christ, the host at the meal, in this sign.

Once these comparisons of doubtful worth are eliminated, however, a root difficulty remains. Our Lord is present in the Eucharist as offered to us. He is not present as accepted by us until, moved by the sign, we take in His person in faith. Any theology of Christ's real presence which considers His presence as offered, as *there*, as if this were the final matter is bound to be puzzling to any Catholic who rightly asks: "And then?"

The Catholic faithful (this includes the clergy, of course) can be scandalized by any intimation from pulpit or press that Jesus Christ is not present, and present as adorable, under the eucharistic species. If there be any such intimation it is a danger to faith and must cease. Once the danger has been removed, the education of the faithful on the meaning of His eucharistic presence can begin. The Pope feared that the faith of many in the one, best-known eucharistic presence of Christ was being imperiled, and he took measures to protect their correct faith in this mystery. He left to others the important task of conveying the mystery in its fullness as the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* brings it to us.

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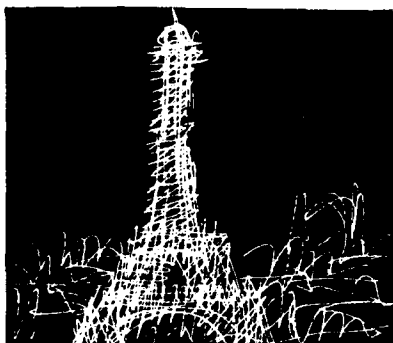
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SARTRE VS. LÉVI-STRAUSS

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tween the Algerian militant and the French philosopher. Sartre in his *Critique* shows a particular liking for spontaneously organized groups brought together for a single action. Fanon has a like feeling. Sartre also recognizes the instability and insufficiency of such groups for a struggle of any long duration. So does Fanon. And Sartre accepts the necessity of authoritarian terror in holding together militant groups, especially when their aims are historically justified. Once again, Fanon makes a like judgment. Finally—and this is perhaps the most interesting point of agreement—Sartre holds in his *Critique* that economic and sociological theories only become genuinely intelligible from the point of view of those who have undertaken a historical action, Fanon places the practical judgments of parties leading a struggle for independence above any kind of doctrine, even the doctrines of socialism.

There is a difference in tone, though, between the two writers, which Sartre notes perceptively in his introduction to Fanon's book. Sartre writes: "When Fanon says of Europe that she is rushing to her doom, far from sounding the alarm, he is merely concluding a diagnosis. . . . As to curing . . . no: he has other things



to think about . . . for Fanon is not interested in us at all; his work—red hot for some—in what concerns us is as cold as ice; he often speaks of us, never to us."

Behind this difference of tone there is a difference not of theory but of situation. Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* expresses the thrilling prospect of historical action for peoples hitherto denied access to it. Sartre's introduction to Fanon's book expresses the disappointment and chagrin of Europeans (also Americans) who desire above all else an active role in the historical process and can see no way of attaining to it. In fact, Sartre's *Critique*, in its most interesting parts, concerns itself with those obstacles to historical action which the peoples of the so-called free world have recently confronted and been unable to surmount.

Are only the peoples of the underdeveloped countries able to act historically? And is historical action the only kind of action in which men can find significance? I suspect that Sartre has already answered these questions, and in a way negative to our hopes. And that is why, I think, his *Critique* has had little resonance

in Europe or America. Sartre has nothing to say in it—politically, that is—to Europeans or Americans, except that they ought to support the action of the colonial peoples.

In his introduction to Fanon's book Sartre writes: "Today the native populations reveal their true nature, and at the same time our exclusive 'club' reveals its weakness—that it's neither more nor less than a minority. Worse than that: since the others become men in name against us, it seems that we are the enemies of mankind; the elite shows itself in its true colors—it is nothing more than a gang."

"Come and Get Us"

Does this not amount to urging the Africans, the Asians, and the South Americans to come and get us—the Europeans and North Americans? And is there nothing for us in the advanced countries to do except side with the claims—not always reasonable—made against us by the peoples of the Third World? Is there nothing for white Americans to do except support the claims made against them by the Negroes? And is there nothing for European humanity—of which North Americans are a part—to do now but cheer the efforts made by the underdeveloped peoples to destroy it—and imitate it?

I am willing to grant Sartre—and Fanon too—that if every African does not finally get a white bathtub and some type of parliament, the world may be destroyed. So there is little point in asking whether for Africans to have bathtubs and parliaments is more important than for the world to endure. Doubtless to get these blessings, if they are indeed that, much blood will be shed. There will be many injustices, also inexpiable crimes. But we cannot stop the process we ourselves inaugurated. The European and American devotion to historical and technological development for more than a century cannot but be the dominating ideal for decades to come among the underdeveloped peoples.

But what can we make our ideal, we who have progressed enough to be sick of progressivism? Can it be just to cheer the progress of those to whom such progress is heartening, and sustain their hatred of us for being ahead of them? Can we do nothing more than aid them to catch up with us? Cannot Europeans and Americans help themselves?

For Europe is in trouble too, also North America; and not merely because the colonized peoples have taken up arms against colonialism and mean to pay us off for our sins. The fact is that for a long period of history these same sins were perfectly consistent with the continuity of European and American civilization and did not indicate that the humanity which created this civilization was in a state of crisis. Now it is. But why?

Once again, what can the ideal of Europeans and of

North Americans be today? Also of the Soviet peoples, to whom progress is hardly more of a problem now than it is for us? Some years ago an Italian socialist, Andrea Caffi, said this to me: "Socialism has to have a new meaning. It must mean from now on that no one should be forced to do any kind of work which seems foolish to him or is harmful to others. Also it must mean that many more moments of human experience can now have a clear and intelligible meaning. With the present advance of technology such demands are not necessarily utopian, and anything less is unworthy of one who calls himself a socialist." Think what such an ideal would mean if expressed to the Soviet peoples. In fact, it is being expressed to them right now, indirectly to be sure, by those artists and writers who have caught their interest and, unfortunately, the interest of the Soviet authorities.

From Metaphysics to Anthropology

At the outset I referred to Sartre's *Critique* as his second effort at a philosophical anthropology. *Being and Nothingness*, of course, was his first effort, and in that work he did speak to the people of the West. I must add here that, in my opinion, *Being and Nothingness* was more genuinely philosophical than is his *Critique*. It was not, like the latter, a generalization of anthropological and historical facts, assembled from all kinds of sources, but an attempt to think about man as the central object of our philosophical problems. As such, it implied an ethic, and Sartre announced he would follow it with an ethic, though many doubted that he could. Instead of making good his promise, he states categorically in his new work that philosophy cannot advance today beyond the philosophical position already taken by Marx (nobody, not even Sartre, knows exactly what that position is), and limits himself to generalizing anthropological and historical data in ways he thinks consonant with Marxist doctrine. So the *Critique* is not a genuinely philosophical work, nor does it even imply an ethic. It assumes the absolute validity of historical action, and of anything that might be done to gain access to such action. And it does not go beyond the view of ethics Sartre expressed in his book on Genet, published in 1952, in which he wrote: "Thus a morality which does not explicitly assert that it cannot possibly be adhered to today contributes to the mystification and the alienation of men." In other words, no morality can be conceived of today whose precepts we will not be forced to violate.

The strongest attack on Sartre's *Critique* to date has come from another Frenchman—he happens to be Sartre's admirer and friend—Claude Lévi-Strauss, who was led to anthropology, he tells us, by his interest in philosophy. May I note here that according to the German thinker Martin Heidegger, the transformation of metaphysics into anthropology was achieved in France, by

none other than René Descartes. In any case, the two most powerful intellectual positions now being expressed in the land of Descartes are based on different conceptions of the past—and future—of man.

But Lévi-Strauss does not like at all the manner in which Sartre has derived his new anthropology out of Cartesianism. In *La Pensée Sauvage*, Lévi-Strauss writes: "In fact, Sartre becomes the prisoner of his Cogito: the Cogito of Descartes gave one access to the universal but on the condition of remaining a psychological and individual being; Sartre, in sociologizing the Cogito, merely changes his prison . . . thus the approach of Sartre to the world and to man shows that narrowness traditionally seen in closed societies . . . Descartes, who wanted to lay the foundations of physics, cut Man from Society. Sartre, who was trying to found an anthropology, cuts his society from other societies."

Right. But I must add that the society that Sartre now thinks his, is that of the Third World's radicals. Turning Descartes' "I think" into the "We think" of a particular social group, the group he favors because it is capable of historical action, Sartre has cut himself off from all other groups, is forced to regard them as objects.

May I ask the reader not to hurry at this point over a problem only stateable in abstract terms? Even in his *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre committed himself to the subject-object relationship in all the affairs of persons. Even in the relation between two individuals, according to Sartre, only one could be the subject and the other would have to be his (or her) object; one would have to be constituted by the other, and accept being thus constituted. Against this view, Merleau-Ponty pointed out that we can constitute others as constituting us, though the logic of this experience is still elusive; thus two can confront each other as subjects. But for Sartre, only one individual could be the subject, and now, in his *Critique*, only one social group.

In *La Pensée Sauvage*, Lévi-Strauss goes on to attack Sartre's exaltation of historical action, and also to vindicate the possibility of moral behavior now, as against Sartre's conviction, similar to that of Communists like Brecht, that deeds can only be truly moral at some point in time. In making these judgments Lévi-Strauss has, it seems to me, taken a stand very much like that now being held by the radical spirits among American youth today. Does this mean that Lévi-Strauss is himself the prisoner of some particular group, as I suggest that Sartre is a prisoner of the group he favors, the radicals of the Third World?

By no means. The denial of history-making as an ultimate value, and the contention that action can and ought to be moral, do not exclude the communication of an individual with groups, or of one group with other groups. About this Lévi-Strauss is perfectly clear: I must say many of the young American radicals are not. Often they talk like Sartreans, and refuse communication even with

those who might agree with them, but happen to be older. Such attitudes in the American youth are, I think, superficial and bound to pass, being inconsistent with their real interests, and have been given far too much attention by intellectuals like Lewis Feuer who are interested in attacking them.

History as Myth

History is a myth, Lévi-Strauss contends, and plays the same role in the mind of Sartre that the eternal past plays in the minds of primitives. Why is history a myth? Because the more detailed the information a historian gives us about the past, the less able he is to explain or interpret it. Also, an event has only to be sufficiently distant from us in time, or distanced from us by our thoughts, for it to lose whatever intelligibility it had. And whatever we ourselves may do in order to achieve what Sartre calls historical action, our deeds, when a certain time has passed, must become myths to those who come after us.

As he dismisses the value of historical action, Lévi-Strauss stresses the view that decent behavior, justice, and solidarity have been present in the most primitive communities. He writes in *Tristes Tropiques*: "The zealots of progress run the risk of underestimating and thus have known too little about the immense riches which our race has accumulated . . . the golden age which blind superstition situated behind or ahead of us is in us." And in *La Pensée Sauvage*: ". . . each and every one of the tens or hundreds of thousands of societies which have co-existed, or succeeded each other, ever since man made his appearance on this earth, has availed itself of a moral certitude—the very one we ourselves can invoke—proclaiming that even in a society reduced to a tiny band of nomads, or a hamlet lost in the heart of the forest, the meaning and dignity of which human life is capable are to be found."

From the point of view expressed, or implied here, the societies of Western Europe, as the societies being created in the new nations, are not at all representative of the kind of harmony which can and ought to prevail among men. Lévi-Strauss even thinks, with Rousseau, that our whole effort for progress and modernization was "ill-boding." To be sure, Europeans, North Americans included, are responsible for the present craze for progress and modernization. But I think we are also responsible at this point in our history to cure our own illnesses and not merely to endure the consequence of having spread them in other parts of the world.

And here I cannot but think of the efforts of the American youth to solidarize themselves with the American Negroes in their struggles for civil rights; also to create more genial and human conditions for learning on American campuses. What the American youth who took part in the Berkeley riots expressed most strongly was a lack

of interest in progress as such. The aims of the American youth were immediate and moral, rather than prospective or political. They claimed that whatever they could accomplish they wanted to accomplish of themselves. They said they wanted to redress wrongs rather than to create the future. They were able to act, and they did not raise the question as to whether their action had historical meaning. They were interested in the immediate correction of what they considered to be present injustices, present ills. Mario Savio said recently: "I have a deep-seated suspicion of anyone who requires a theory to show that some practice is morally wrong." While the youth are not always this clear-headed, there can be no mistaking the point, the incidence, of their criticism. For surely in a developed world there must be something to be said about how things are done, also undone, by bureaucrats and officials, if you please, by the Establishment. I wonder if any of the young people in the Berkeley riots or in the Civil Rights movement has been influenced by Lévi-Strauss. Perhaps some have. But in any case, on the basis of what has been said and done by American youth in these movements, I should say that, for all the sympathy expressed by them for the American Negro, still oppressed in both the South and the North, and for those colonial peoples still struggling for advancement, the main interest of American youth is being directed towards the correction of those present injustices which efforts toward progress are often ready to ignore. It is as if the American youth felt—and how could anyone contravert this feeling?—that in the United States a high enough scale of abundance has been achieved for us to ask what this abundance is for, and how it is to be distributed. The American youth, I suggest, want to be their own heroes, and will not delegate, as Sartre does, the burden of heroism to the underdeveloped nations of Africa and elsewhere.

View From the Outside

This is a difficult age to be sure. And even Lévi-Strauss is not without his contradictions. When George Steiner (in *Encounter*, April 1966) accused him of having a "theory of history and of cultural hierarchy that is profoundly unMarxian," Lévi-Strauss replied: ". . . Of course I am not a Marxist in the ordinary sense . . . something which can be true when we look at it from inside a culture is no longer true when we try to consider it from the outside. Therefore I am in full agreement with Marx, and even with Sartre, when they say that for a member of modern contemporary civilization things appear this way. History has a meaning and should have, because this is the only way to give a wider meaning to civilization itself. I can perfectly well claim, at the same time, that while this is true inside the society of the observer, it ceases to be true when we try to reflect a broader point of view and look at it from the outside."

Why should Lévi-Strauss have made such concessions to historicism, Marxist or Sartrist? And why was he willing to concede here the moral stand which distinguishes his own anthropology from the moral relativism of other schools? And is it right to say that something can be true when seen from inside society and yet ceases to be true when looked at from the outside? Would Lévi-Strauss then admit that the idea of keeping Negroes segregated is true from within the American South and false only when considered by people from the North? But this is exactly what the Southerners say and have said ever since the Civil War.

The trouble with this statement of Lévi-Strauss is that it tends to make his position less clear. What that position amounts to, as set forth in its purity in his anthropological writings, is that the civilized peoples of the developed countries may now rejoin their primitive brothers of the remote past. They can have access, if not to the making of further history, then to moral and ritual actions in which the whole meaning and dignity of life may be expressed. Surely the sense of Lévi-Strauss' main pronouncements as an anthropologist is a condemnation of Marxian historicism and an encouragement to regard it as devoid of truth. Our prospect now, I take it Strauss is really saying, is to become again like the primitives. There is certainly every indication that the American youth have this feeling, and no doubt came to it of themselves.

In the Third World, the idea of historical and technological progress will certainly be dominant for many decades. I do not see how Europeans or Americans can be unsympathetic to that ideal when it is held by others. We were the ones who originally advanced it. But I think too that it can no longer be our own ideal. What can the ideal for our world be? About this, Sartre, still concerned with progress and history, has said little to interest us; while Lévi-Strauss, taking the very remote past for a model, an inspiration, has told us something.

JAMES HEARST

POTENCIES

Earth sun-plowed, rain-swept, trembles
at seed stir, thrust of root and foot,
summer sweats in birth and growth,
I in overalls as judge's robes sentence
tares from wheat, weevils from bins,
rats from stored boxes but the
judgment word is never final. Behind
my back I know a thistle fouls the
lily bed, a quick tail whisks beneath
the cellar wall, on some clear nights
a ring frames the moon.

SEX, OLD AND NEW

THE SCREEN

Now that we've come to the "anything goes" period in the history of cinema, no theme connected with sex seems to be too delicate as grist for the movie mill. For many years films have touched on adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, impotency; but now there's an outspoken frankness in pictures dealing with these subjects, and if the topics (even including artificial insemination and masturbation) are treated with discernment and without blatancy, the films themselves are received without too much hue and cry. Two new items in the anything-goes school, both imports, are now winning attention; and whether or not they're for you depends on you.

The Italian-French movie version of "Mandragola," like the original play which Machiavelli wrote around 1518, is almost entirely concerned with a seduction. The opening scenes (done under the film's titles and credits) show Callimaco, a wealthy Florentine, hearing about the great beauty of Lucrezia, wife of a Florentine notary, while the boisterous drunks in this French inn lewdly disrobe an embarrassed barmaid. (Although these shots skillfully set the tone for the whole bawdy movie, I do wish producers would realize that if the under-title scenes are too interesting, no one reads the credits—which is hardly fair to the hard-working film makers). Then the scene shifts to 1500 Florence where Callimaco is determined first to see Lucrezia, and then to get into her bed. Seeing her proves no problem when Callimaco does his peeping Tom act at the baths where he rents a peek hole, or from the rooftops when he looks into the notary's house where the childless beauty is being treated for her supposed sterility.

The seduction, however, requires some of the most complicated plotting ever used in a movie. Greatly aided by a con-man, Ligurio, Callimaco is able to persuade the notary that if Lucrezia is given a potion of mandrake root she will become fertile—although the first man to sleep with her after the potion will die. Lucrezia, as virtuous as she is beautiful, refuses, but is finally convinced by her husband, her mother, and her priest. Disguised as a stupid yokel, Callimaco is shoved into her bedroom. And after a night vividly portrayed in the movie, the once-demure Lucrezia is so impressed by Callimaco that she keeps him on as her lover.

Handsomely filmed in black-and-white in Italy, with lovely sixteenth-century costumes and settings, "Mandragola" is also enhanced by a first-rate cast under director Alberto Lattuada: Philippe Leroy as the amorous Callimaco, Rosanna Schiaffino as the gorgeous Lucrezia, Jean Claude Brialy as the parasitical Ligurio, Romolo Valli as the silly cuckolded husband, Toto as the money-hungry,

hypocritical priest, and several others. The film catches well the mood of Machiavelli's cynical ribald play, which hasn't a decent person in its whole roster. But the play talks most of the action, while the movie, as cinema should, shows it. And one wonders if this play, determined to sell sex instead of love, vice instead of virtue, should have been made into a movie at all. Its 100-minute running time devoted to a seduction becomes a vulgar, one-track exercise that might even have shocked worldly Niccolo Machiavelli.

The new French film made by Agnes Varda, although even more realistic in its bedroom scenes, is quite a different kettle of fish. The ending of "Mandragola" emphasizes Lucrezia's disillusionment: since all men, including her husband, mother, priest, are wicked, she might as well play their game. In "Le Bonheur" ("Happiness") Miss Varda may be somewhat cynical about man's behavior, but she does not editorialize. She presents her characters, shows them in action, and only says in her baffling finale, here they are. The opening scenes of her film are incredibly beautiful as they show a family on a picnic: the father, played by a handsome young French TV favorite, Jean-Claude Drouot; the mother, played by Drouot's real-life wife, Claire; and their little boy and girl, played by the Drouot children. These scenes truly convey happiness as the family romp on the picnic and enjoy each other and the setting around them. And we enjoy them too through Varda's exquisite color photography of the happy people, the trees, the flowers, and the lovely sunshine, all of which might have come right from a Renoir painting.

And the family's daily life continues to explode with happiness as the young father goes about his work as a cabinet maker, and the mother tends the house and children. But into this garden of Eden comes nature. The husband meets a pretty, blonde postal clerk (Marie France Boyer) and, bit-by-bit without any planning, they fall in love. He decides he has enough happiness for two; and she becomes his mistress. The bedroom scenes are quite explicit. And he is happier than ever. Then one day, on another family picnic, similar to the first scene, he tells his wife about the other girl, using a lot of vague language about an apple orchard, apple blossoms and apples with enough to share for all. So the man and his wife have sex again, and when he wakes up from his nap, he discovers she has drowned herself. But after the sad funeral, the man marries the pretty postal clerk. And the final scene shows them together on a picnic with the children as the picture exudes happiness with love and flowers and trees.

I'm not sure what Agnes Varda is trying to say—unless it's that every man must make his own happiness according to his individual needs and beliefs. Or perhaps the whole picture is a joke to show us how we can be fooled into thinking we're happy, especially when we think only of ourselves. But whatever the moral, Miss Varda knows

how to display happiness and makes us feel it, and perhaps lead us into a trap. Next time, she might try Emily Dickinson's "I am nobody. Who are you? Are you nobody too? Then we're a pair of nobodies. Don't tell."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

AUNTIE MAIMED



THE STAGE

Here come the musicals again.

I find the story of Auntie Mame so basically unattractive that I doubt if I could warm to it even as an underwater ballet. To call it untruthful would be an inadequate criticism—every comedy is a glandular distortion of a tragedy; but in this case, the unpleasantness so triumphs over the joke that in the end there is no joke. The story of a brassy Park Avenue vitalist turning her nephew into a precocious freak has just too much pain in it, and the author's own unconcealed delight at the operation completes the de-humorization.

In real life, people like Auntie Mame are either bores, prating about "life is for living" while the guests tip-toe away, or monsters. They are either too silly to know the difference between vitality and nervousness, or too far-gone to care. In either case, an author has his work cut out making comic characters out of these hare-brained harpies.

In the new musical version, Angela Lansbury leans to the boring interpretation. Her performance is so fundamentally colorless that half-an-hour in her company, minus songs and dances, would glaze the eye of the most fun-loving nephew. Fortunately, she does dance quite nicely, with a good upright carriage, so that, returning to real life, one would probably encourage her to do plenty of that and to talk as little as possible.

Miss Lansbury's temporary insipidity radically affects the bias of the story. Auntie Mame's introduction of her nephew to the world of strident, self-conscious fun loses all its slightly corrupt overtones. Miss Lansbury is no worse than an empty-headed scout mistress, and her orgies could be slightly tipsy singouts. The nephew will learn no very distressing lessons from these.

So instead of being subjected to the rationalizations of a superannuated libertine, we get the earnest hortations of a "let's all have fun, girls" bore. Which you prefer is a matter of taste. The more sinister gospel is maintained single-handed by Beatrice Arthur as an alcoholic crony with real hangovers and a real liver (Auntie Mame's liver seems to be made of marzipan.) Miss Arthur turns in a mean, nasty performance, worthy of a more searching production; but it is buried in the dominant whimsy.

With Mame rendered harmless, stingless and flavorless,

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everything depends on the gags and musical hoopla. Some of the former are quite snappy. (For instance, though it sounds a little familiar: Excited girl: "I'm going to hold my breath until morning." A.M.: "You do that, honey.") The tunes are so-so. Jerome Herman is master of the "type" song—the minstrel-type song, the tango-type song—but there is always something curiously unspecific about his stuff.

The dancing is a real disappointment. Onna White choreographed last year's "Half a Sixpence" so well that one hoped for great things. But her only idea this year seems to be to keep everyone racing round in joyous circles. Even the big "Mame" number, which sets off promisingly enough in red hunting coats (I am a pushover for red hunting coats) is rather tattily executed.

The easy summary would be to say that "Mame" has been flattened into a standard musical, not bad not good. But the hysterical response of the audience, which started clapping during the nondescript overture, and which played repeated havoc with the play's timing by further irrational bursts of ecstasy, takes more explaining.

It may be that the word "hit" had come drifting up from Philadelphia, and that this was simply a "hit" audience, confirming that it was watching a hit. But it could be that the Mame legend, with its noxious elements of wish-fulfillment, is close to the heart of the people who still go to Broadway plays. In which case, the appearance of one more version of this dreary story is not only a bore but a symptom. (*At the Winter Garden*)

"A Time for Singing" is, in contrast, a nice, wholesome flop. The main function of the book part of a musical is to know when to get out of the way. But with this one, the book can only be compared to some oafish kibitzer who has wandered onto the stage and cannot be enticed off. He is an affable, good-hearted kibitzer, but he cannot keep his mind on the subject, or remember why it was supposed to be interesting. Whenever his tale threatens to turn dramatic he scratches his head and talks about something else.

Well—enough of this figure, itself a bit cumbersome perhaps. There is some good quasi-Welsh choral singing, rare enough in a musical, but the tunes do not sound Welsh, and other manful attempts to make things come out lusty and regional are similarly unsuccessful. In the circumstances, good performances would have no place to go. (*At the Broadway*)

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BOOKS

A mysterious stranger comes to town

Omensetter's Luck

WILLIAM H. GASS

New American Library, \$5.95

IRVING MALIN

This novel begins with an auction of "nice things"—sofas, chairs, jellies, plates—once owned by Mrs. Pimber. We are not informed why they are being sold, but we sense that they are "sacred." They hold truth for Israbestis Tott. Although he tries to communicate their meaning to those around him (and to us), he speaks obscurely: "He was conscious, always, of the inadequacy of his details, the vagueness of his pictures, the falsehood in all of his implicit etceteras. . . ." We are introduced to those tensions between consciousness and "objective" reality, selfhood and community, which are at the heart of this brilliant work.

Then we are thrown into another "center of consciousness"—to use Henry James' phrase—before we can discover more about the auction. We become Henry Pimber. He is another confused (and confusing) thinker. He cannot understand Brackett Omensetter, that mysterious stranger who arrives with his pregnant wife and two daughters and proceeds "to cast a spell" upon the town. *Who is he? What does he want? Why is he so open?* Because Pimber cannot answer these questions about Omensetter, he wants to destroy him. First he calls him names; then he avoids him; and finally he manages to burden him with all of the evils that have befallen the world. But he is unable to touch him. He panics. He must blot out his own consciousness; he gets away from Omensetter by hanging himself.

We expect to find out the deep truth about Omensetter—and all that he represents—when we are next put into the mind of Jethro Furber, the preacher. He will control shifting reality (be it old plate, Omensetter's luck, or painful

consciousness itself). *He will save us.* It is ironic that he is even more "unbalanced" than Pimber or Tott. The more he tries to enclose the stranger—to contain his flowing nature—the more reckless he becomes. He spurts images as ideas (and vice versa); he loses himself—or tries to—in madness as Pimber does in suicide. He is *spellbound*—completely unable to distinguish between Omensetter and himself, the Lord and Satan, mind and matter.

His "revelations" continue to frustrate us. We get closer and closer to Omensetter—it's like hunting the white whale!—and we find, oddly enough, that he is only a man. His luck—the "unnatural," spontaneous acceptance of unity?—does not even exist. *He suffers as we do.* Although we cannot embrace the final truth of Furber that only the dead are lucky, we can share his belief—or madness?—that despair is never removed by magic or luck.

Perhaps I have given the impression that William Gass has written a dry, philosophical tract about Truth, Evil, Despair—one that we would not like to read. He has not. He has been able, on the contrary, to present *complexities in particulars, ideas in images*. Not only can he describe different states of consciousness—contrast the softness of Tott to the wrath of Furber!—but he can capture the way each state is shaped by (or shapes) the elements. We first find Furber in his garden: "Certainly he had brought to the garden the little order it had, laying the walk with his own hands and clearing the graves of weeds and creepers, carefully scrubbing the markers. The rough cold bench was as familiar to him as his skin, and the garden, with its secret design and its holy significance, was like himself. He smiled as he considered it (he had considered often), for the body of any symbol was absurd, as ridiculous as Christ's body was, so lank and ribby."

I have quoted this passage at length

because it is representative. Gass vividly describes the bench and creepers *while* he demonstrates their symbolic value. Reality moves between mind and matter; it breathes and "thinks." This is *our* problematic luck: we are able to give order to our gardens—or our gardens to us?—but we can never be sure that others can appreciate this order. The consciousness of omens terrifies us in this passage—and in the entire novel.

The Schoolchildren

MARY FRANCES GREEN
& ORLETTA RYAN

Pantheon, \$4.95

NAT HENTOFF

This is a book for voyeurs. The authors, both with experience as teachers in slum schools in New York, tell it like they say it is. No educational theories. No detailed suggestions for change. Straight documentary all the way. See the culturally deprived children. See the violent children. See the foully swearing children. And see the poor, beleaguered teacher trying to teach. But how can she? How lucky we are that our children don't have to go to school with *them*!

I do not say that the authors intended their book to be a weapon for Northern sanctifiers of the neighborhood school. Nor, I think, did they intend to buttress the various neo-determinists, many of them academics, who are insisting that once cultural deprivation really sets in, a certain amount of irreparable harm has been done. And it sets in early, they say. Expand Project Head Start, they say. But after Project Head Start, aren't the kids still going to go into schools like those described here? That's not our department, they say.

Clearly the conscious intent of *The Schoolchildren* is to awaken our compassion for these elementary school youngsters in Harlem and East Harlem. And

the book does do that—especially by having the children themselves speak for much of the time. (“I don’t think I grow up. Sometimes when my big sister messin with me, I wish I don’t be here at all.”)

But the book has other results. It can easily lead to the kind of conclusion John F. Warner makes in his report on it in the *Saturday Review*: “They make clear . . . that you cannot really control twenty-eight fourth-graders who openly lace their speech with the crudest profanity—though not one can define the word ‘neighbor.’ That you have enormous difficulty in widening the horizons of children whose entire world consists of a single city block and who are either terrified or apathetic towards the prospects of penetrating that boundary.”

It leads to that prototypical liberal cop-out, as proclaimed yet once again by Peter Schrag of Amherst in his review of this book in the *Nation*: “There is an internal perfection about poverty and deprivation which tends to regenerate its separate evils and to defeat scattered efforts. Any real hope of change requires reforms across the board, and not merely in the schools.”

Sorry, kids. You’ve got to stay in that zoo. Maybe your children or their children can be let out to mingle with decent folk.

Oh, the authors don’t blame the children. At least, on the surface they don’t seem too. It’s the principals and other administrators who exert most of their energy trying to avoid the open emotional sores of the kids and who tie up the teachers in webs of unnecessary paper work. It’s the woeful lack of psychological help (“ . . . a fifth-grader threw himself on the floor in Assembly, screaming. Nothing less is the province of Guidance. ‘There’s really no place to send the child unless he is screaming.’ ”).

It’s the splintered families from which the kids come. It’s the long since overburdened mothers. (“I don’t know what she wants with a person sometimes. Mostly, I guess she just wants you to go away.”) It’s the overcrowded classrooms. (And here it’s unfortunate that the authors did not investigate what happened when class sizes were drastically cut in some slum schools through the More

Effective Schools program—a program the New York Board of Education is not enlarging even though the results have proved you don’t have to wait for “across the board” changes to reach slum children).

And, in some cases, they observe, the fault is in the teachers. Not the protagonist in the book (apparently a composite of Greene and Ryan). She’s doing the best she can. It’s just that the odds are overwhelming. But is she doing the best one could expect and are the odds so unbeatable? To what extent have Greene and Ryan absorbed that venerable self-fulfilling prophecy that these kids are too crippled to “achieve” according to middle-class standards? On the evidence of this book, to a large extent. This is how they describe one boy: “In a middle-class home he’d probably be making space capsules and rockets. Gets high on new clothes or his own hipster memories of fights, quarrels, big nights.” I know a fifth-grade class in Harlem containing a number of variants of that boy. The class began the year way behind in reading. By spring they had built their own computer, and their reading levels had grown markedly because they had to know how to read in order to follow the directions.

Some of the children are described here as “phantom figures.” But are most of the teachers in slum schools real to the children? Do they show any evidence of being interested in what interests the children? These two teachers tell us of Miguel who can’t read but who knows “fifteen rock ‘n’ roll songs in Spanish with many verses, a dozen TV commercials word-perfect in English.” Did it ever occur to them to teach reading—and much more—by writing out the lyrics to rock and roll songs? Consider a successful program for school dropouts in Boston run by the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Northeastern University and the Y.M.C.A. Says Dr. Melvin Howard, director of the program’s reading center: “We try to draw out what these kids know . . . and then we try to relate it all to something we hope they will absorb. We begin by talking to them in their own language of the streets.”

Or, as John Holt wrote in the *New*

York Herald Tribune’s Book Week about Miss Burke, the composite teacher in the book: “How can we persuade Miss Burke that this talk of theirs, instead of being a kind of safety valve to pass a little time in between struggles with Readers and Multiplication Tables, should be the core and the heart and the source of all their education—not just what they occasionally talk about, but what they write and read, and draw, and sing, and dance, and act about; that the business of school should be to give these children, not just respite from the insane life of the street, but a way of coming to grips with it, of understanding it, and perhaps eventually of changing it? For this is what slum education must be about.”

But for that to happen requires teachers who can project themselves to some degree into slum life, who understand its potential strengths as well as its pathology, who *expect* at least as high achievement from these kids as they would of middle-class kids and who know how to speak with (not only to) the kids to make that achievement possible.

Miss Burke is forever giving tests and correcting tests. When will the public schools, as many private schools already have, jettison this crude, atavistic device for determining how much has been learned or rather how much the teacher can be given back of what she wants to see and which then can be quickly forgotten.

For one of *The Schoolchildren*, whose stance is that of a permanent victim, “just to be alone in this room with an adult is the happiest hour of the day for him.” Of course, they want contact with an adult—but one who has time for them, who has confidence in them, who can be trusted, who digs what they know and what they want to know, who can see the way they live with much more comprehension than good-intentioned pity allows.

I should add that Greene and Ryan, perhaps unwittingly, stack the deck to “prove” how at bay even they are in the zoo. To read them you would think that just about every child in every seat in these slum schools has moderate to severe emotional and behavior problems.

It's simply not true. Even in the worst of Harlem and East Harlem schools, the classes they describe are hardly characteristic. Certainly many kids do need help, and most aren't getting it, but I wonder why Greene and Ryan tell us nothing about slum children who do make it against these odds. The self-fulfilling prophecy again?

On May 10, 1824, the Common Council of the City of New York proclaimed: "Indeed if any additional evidence were wanting in favour of the Superior and commanding Excellence of this system of instruction it is to be found in this Institution the African Free School where the poor children of Colour of our City are rescued from the complicated Evils that belong to their Situation & placed in a course of mental and religious improvement that enables them to look forward to the time when . . . in part the degradation that belongs to their Colour and their shame shall be wiped off — Ethiopia shall Stretch forth her hands unshackled by Slavery and unstained by the pollutions of Ignorance & Idolatry."

That time ain't come yet, and one reason is that the public school system, and too many of the teachers therein, still see these children—however unconsciously—as so "degraded" by their class as well as their color that they can't be "motivated" to learn as much as middle-class kids can. A teacher quoted in *The Schoolchildren* thus exculpates herself: "He climbed out on a ledge of the third-floor washroom for forty minutes this week—and that's the distance of some of these children from the plantation in 1965. This is what Josie comes from. And it's taken these hundred years of slums, dejection, and privation just to produce her and put her in this school."

But more and more adults in the slums are unwilling to let even the "well-intentioned" though impotent teacher off the hook. "Look here," says a Harlem mother to a teacher in *The Schoolchildren*, "you babes went to college. You oughta be able to teach . . . She's been in this school four years. How come she can't read?"

Yeah, how come, Miss Greene and Miss Ryan?

The Weathercock

ANN STANFORD

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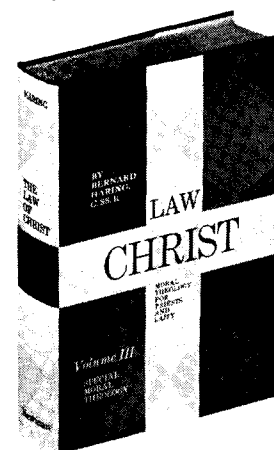
KENNETH REXROTH

Shotgun reviews of poetry are dubious at best. I for one always feel insulted to find myself included in one. There is a certain relationship between these books and it might be fruitful to discuss them together. They are all in conventional verse, but to paraphrase the maxim from *Animal Farm*, some are more conventional than others and they are each conventional in a different way.

A. D. Hope is one of Australia's leading poets. His work is very competent, often witty—"The Lingam and the Yoni/Were walking hand in hand. . . ."—often sardonic, and always something that so much poetry is not, the expression of a perfectly mature man. Yet it is conventional indeed, in an old-fashioned way that no one in America could possibly manage today. Reviewers have said all sorts of wild things about him. His ease amongst the rhymes and meters seems to demoralize them. He does not resemble Swift or Pope in the least, as one maintains, nor is he deeply rooted in classical antiquity, nor do his poems "bear the mark of eternity" any more conspicuously than lots of others.

He writes like Calverly, or Belloc, or Day Lewis, or the inventors of the more savage limericks, the wit of the more mordant Balliol men of other days. It is provincial verse in the sense that the problems, spiritual, moral, psychological, and technical with which it copes endure in this degree of purity only far

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out in the world outback, away from the great metropolises with their Baudelaires, Rilkes, Artauds and Alan Ginsburgs. Why? How? After all, Hope did in fact go to Oxford, and has lived in Europe and the USA. What makes Australian verse, and for that matter Canadian verse in English, but not in French, so anachronistic on the world stage, and yet so good? If written by an American or Frenchman, poetry like Hope's would be fatuous and hackneyed. His is not only better than many an avant-gardist's, but much better than the fag end of his tradition in the homeland—say somebody like Betjeman.

Henri Coulette's poems are topical and popical. Onassis, Dick Tracy, computer poets, chases on the freeway, love in the park—the scene is Los Angeles, one form of the future. This is the sort of verse the *New Yorker* publishes, a more fugitive *vers de société* than Praed or Thackeray and not so skilled. Why again, can't Americans write stuff like this that really bites deep, hangs on and chews? I suppose because the best Bri-

tish satirical verse is written by reactionaries, and in America we are all progressives of one sort or another. Great humor is the reasonable expression of the tragic sense of life, and that means a different kind of civilization.

Roger Hecht's poems are very remarkable if they are by a young man. If not, not. Superficially they are conventional like Hope's; on close examination, they are more like Yvor Winters'. Troubled, full of metaphysical angst, wrought with great care and with hidden surprises. As a mature achievement they are rather slight in substance and narrow, in a first book with more and richer to come, they are omens of great promise.

Best of all these poets by far is Ann Stanford. As an undergraduate at Stanford before the war, she was one of the most remarkable poets in California. She spent a good many years disentangling herself from the influence of Yvor Winters, and publishing little. Today she is totally her own master, a unique person, a special voice. Yet of all the old "Poets of the Pacific" group she has most fulfilled the more important demands of the man they used to call "The Boss." On the jacket it says, "Crystalline would be the word for the illuminating clarity of Ann Stanford's poetry—except that hers is not an inorganic, but a living crystal. Few poets today better exemplify the criteria of 'wholeness, harmony, and radiance' that the great philosopher said all art should possess. Hers is an intimate but luminous vitality." I wrote it. And it's true, not just another blurb.

The De-Romanization of the American Catholic Church

EDWARD WAKIN &
JOSEPH F. SCHEUER

Macmillan, \$6.95

PHILIP DEASY

Aggiornamento literature or "literature" continues to roll along. It also continues to be an expression of things hoped for. Hope for an open Church, hope that the layman will truly emerge and that his honest mind will resolve the dilemma of

being both a Catholic and an American. A key sentence in this latest contribution to the *aggiornamento* output refers to "the urgency that moves American Catholic liberals today: to de-Romanize the Church." "Roman" is seen as a "cultural strait-jacket" that must be removed.

The two authors of this book say that they "undertook with enthusiasm" to bring together all the material they have included in the body of the book, plus the copious footnotes and footnote commentary to each chapter. They are certainly to be commended for such enthusiasm and for their all inclusive and up-to-date coverage.

Readers may not find it easy to share the enthusiasm in its entirety. For one thing there is that antiseptic, sociological prose to cope with and the many pages soggy with statistics. For another, it's now getting a bit tiresome to be told again about the ethnic origins of the American Church and about that awesome Irish influence or to follow again an analysis of why Catholics did or didn't vote for John F. Kennedy in 1960. The approach is fresher and more informative on such subjects as the Negro, the joiner, and the liturgy, and for the most part, in the chapters dealing with education and the press. On the provocative side it should be noted that the authors fear that the education proposals of Mary Perkins Ryan and the liturgical movement "could produce tight little islands of self-conscious Catholics." That condition would be "unrealistic and divisive in contemporary mass society."

Though it covers familiar ground, the chapter on the Catholic intellectual is probably the most satisfying. There is a telling dissection of the term "intellectual apostolate," and a not so telling attempt to give Father Andrew Greeley his sociological lumps. The most chilling chapter is the one entitled "Brides of Christ." Dr. John Wain's article about psychological problems in the religious life is doubtless a responsible and careful analysis, but heavy reliance on that and other references to mental illness among Sisters and insanity in priests gives a lopsided effect. (Recommended to restore the balance: "The Nun: Adaptation and Renewal," an article by Sister M. Charles Borromeo in



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the April issue of *The Lamp*.)

The dreariest condition revealed by this broad spectrum of "the empirical Church" (the authors exclude the supernatural and the transcendent) is that of the secular clergy. There is a vignette of rectory life, the dinner hour, which could be taken as a cheerless twentieth-century counterpart of Canon Sheehan or as a parody of J. F. Powers. Dominating the scene is the monsignor, the authoritarian boss. Next to him is the first assistant, "automated and passive"; then the youngest, not long out of the seminary, "full of ideals and dreams, but devoid of power." Completing the picture is the redoubtable housekeeper, Mary Finnegan, "stout gray-haired, beyond reproach."

These are the three stages of the clerical life, each carrying its own problems; the first, perhaps, the problems of celibacy-stress and alcoholism; the second, the problems of playing the waiting game until the coveted pastorate is attained; the third, of overseeing, and building and raising funds. Beyond the parish is the diocese, that inefficient bureaucracy with its "bizarre personnel procedure that assigns the untrained clergy to the the unfamiliar administrative task." The authors believe with Bishop Mussio that both parish and diocese must be "struck by the revolution that is sweeping the Church"; i.e., must be "de-Romanized." The authors' suggested solutions are revolutionary enough: in the parish, the use of married deacons and married priests who support themselves outside the parish as professionals or white- and blue-collar workers; in the diocese, the use of lay professionals.

The brightest hope for the future appears to be the NCR (*National Catholic Reporter*) Man. About that publication and its readers, the enthusiasm of the authors approaches the lyrical. It also, among other numerous evidences throughout the book, leaves them open to the charge of disingenuousness for saying in their preface that "their presentation is not tied to any side in the controversies involving Catholicism." Let the reader further judge by noting the treatment given the Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name Society, communion breakfasts, the Cursillo movement, Cardinal Spellman,

Senator Joe McCarthy, Father Coughlin, the Cana Conference and the Christian Family Movement. One notable omission: *Ramparts* magazine.

The authors praise *The National Catholic Reporter* for giving its readers a product that is "aggressive and enterprising," and for "not respecting sacred cows." The same praise may be safely accorded Mr. Wakin and Father Scheuer.

The Continent of Circe

NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI

Oxford, \$7

GEORGE WOODCOCK

Mr. Nirad Chaudhuri is the elderly *enfant terrible* of Indian letters. His power of writing attractive English is probably excelled only by the novelist R. K. Narayan, and he has used his eloquence to produce a series of books characterized by idiosyncratic views and an almost compulsive tendency to acerb criticism of every aspect of his country's life.

His fellow Indians—or at least the educated minority who read English—accord him the same kind of scandalized attention as the Welsh once accorded to Caradoc Evans or the Americans of a past generation to H. L. Mencken. His record of childhood and youth in British India, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, was, at the time of its publication in 1951, praised outside his country and rather ostentatiously ignored by his compatriots, but it has since made its way even in India, where it is now something of a modern classic. Mr. Chaudhuri, who lives in deliberate isolation far from the haunts of the Anglicized official class, is at last accepted as one of the better writers of India.

Chaudhuri, on the other hand, refuses to acknowledge even this measure of acceptance. He sees himself still as a man standing alone in unusual honesty, and nothing delights him more, as a number of passages in his new book amply demonstrate, than to be able to recount the evidences of his continued unpopularity among the two classes he dislikes most, the Anglicizing officials and intellectuals, and the fanatics of neo-Hinduism.

Apart from such interludes, which reflect the stance of isolated just man that

characterizes Chaudhuri's earlier books, *The Continent of Circe* can best be regarded as a study of the degeneracy of modern India. Chaudhuri describes it as "An Essay on the Peoples of India," and in the chapters of the book, themselves almost self-contained essays around a single theme, he gives his own view of the present situation and future prospects of all the important Indian communities with the exception of the Sikhs and the Parsees.

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17 June 1966: 375

strong—he foresees little future in a country whose dominant trend, despite the avowed secularism of its rulers, is determined by the wishes of the Hindu majority. The Moslems he sees as a people nostalgically dreaming of their past as a ruling race and loyal to the super-national creed of Islam; they are weighed down by the inescapable and “intolerable burden of fighting to the last for a lost cause.” Those who have observed the difficult ambivalences into which the Indian Moslems were forced during and after

the recent conflict between India and Pakistan will not be inclined to disagree radically with him. Nor can one merely dismiss his view that the aboriginals, the Anglo-Indians and the Indian Christians, at least outside Kerala where they have a special place in local society, are in great danger of losing their identity as communities under the pressure of the prevailing Hinduizing current.

It is in his views on the Hindus themselves that Chaudhuri becomes most controversial. It would be wrong to regard

him as anti-Hindu; indeed, there are certain aspects of traditional Hindu society which he defends against facile Western criticism, and in particular he puts forward a defence of caste as a means of organizing an otherwise chaotic society which—even if one does not accept it—is spirited and impressive.

His thesis, however, is that the Hindus are really a European people in a land whose hostile geography has, like the spells of Circe, turned them into a race completely lacking in the energy which their Aryan ancestors once possessed. His theory of the degenerating effect of climate on the racial psyche, and his neo-Lamarckian insistence on the inheritance of acquired characteristics, run counter to the accepted views of science and remind one of similar theories held by like-minded moralizing iconoclasts, such as Samuel Butler and Bernard Shaw. Modern Hindus, including even the ruling Westernized minority, are, he suggests, the victims of an inescapable mass *acedia* that results from the steady defeat of the race in its battle against the environment, which has shaped all its attitudes, religious, moral and emotional. “Deadened by their slow, dull, and benumbed palsy of suffering they have become unheroic, and their absorption in self-pity has made them incapable of analyzing their sorrow.”

Mr. Chaudhuri is a social analyst who speaks in the tone of prophecy, but he is a prophet without a future, and the pessimism which his particular form of racialism generates is only justified if one ignores the process of individualization which is slowly breaking apart the traditional divisions of Indian society and at

Wide Range

RECENT FEATURES in *Commonweal*—like those this week—demonstrate the wide coverage this lay-edited journal of opinion regularly provides its subscribers: Thomas Merton on secularism Professor Brzezinski on the NATO crisis Congressman Reuss on the Two Chinas Wilfrid Sheed on Hemingway Msgr. Conway on the rights of priests Martin Luther King in Chicago Father Murchland on the prophetic principle Herbert Gans on Slum Housing the Reforming the Parish issue, to cite a few.

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6/17/66

REVIEWERS

IRVING MALIN is the author of *Jews and Americans* and *New American Gothic*.

NAT HENTOFF is the author of *Call The Weeper* and the soon to be published *Our Children Are Dying* (Viking), a book about public education in Harlem.

KENNETH REXROTH’s most recent book is *An Autobiographical Novel* (Doubleday).

PHILIP DEASY teaches English at St. Peter’s College in New Jersey.

GEORGE WOODCOCK has a new book, on George Orwell, *The Crystal Spirit* (Little Brown), due out this fall.

the same time creating new and more positive attitudes among at least some of the younger generation. His truths, because they reveal only the negative aspects of his subject, are at best half-truths. But even half-truths can provoke thought, and this *The Continent of Circe* will undoubtedly do, not least, one hopes, among Mr. Chaudhuri's fellow countrymen.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 349)

to the problems of priestly responsibility and leadership written of by Father McCarthy.

But why do so many overlook the formational function of the priests' union itself in creating rebels? In any industry, there was never found to begin with an effective group of enlightened rebels. Rather what was present was most often the complete intimidation of the workers. The creation of workers who could understand their rights and responsibilities is a major function and effect of union organization.

Teachers and actors can tell us of the great change in their own concepts of their profession that took place as a result of union involvement. Priests today are at about the same stage as unorganized workers were 50 years ago—feeling threatened and insecure at the opportunity to better their lot.

Priests and others who wish more information on forming locals of clergymen are invited to write me at Synanon House, 1351 Ocean Front, Santa Monica.

(REV.) WILLIAM H. DUBAY

Communications Decree

Baltimore, Md.

To the Editors: It may be a bit hasty for Robert McAfee Brown to say of Vatican II's Communication Decree: "It has simply failed to evoke any positive response within the Church" ("Using Council Documents," May 20).

The American Bishops have established a National Office for Radio and Television, with headquarters in New York. Moreover, with the cooperation

of Catholic insurance fraternities, the CARTA (Catholic Radio and Television Apostolate) Foundation has already awarded thousands of dollars to subsidize good religious programs.

Much remains to be done, but I doubt if "This conciliar utterance has been swept under the episcopal rug and ignored."

(REV.) CASIMIR PUGEVICIUS

Abortion Laws

Albany, N.Y.

To the Editors: Barbara Bilinski (letter, April 29) argues that Catholics should not seek to impose their religious convictions on others by opposing the reform of abortion laws. The editors' reply was that minorities have a right to press their views—in a democratic fashion (which is simply to say that this right, like all others, must be exercised responsibly). Miss Bilinski might answer that members of a pluralistic society should not try to legislate morality except where the common good or the rights of another are clearly concerned. Rather they should allow others the freedom to act according to their own beliefs as long as they cause no harm to anyone else. Whenever possible, laws should be permissive.

This principle is not easily applied to the problem of abortion, however. The issue is complicated by the debated status of the fetus. If one believes that it is a human life, then abortion is *not* a private matter to be determined by individual conscience. It is an eminently public act—the violation of the right to life of another human being. Outlawing abortion, from this point of view, is no more an infringement on personal freedom than are laws against stealing or homicide.

Miss Bilinski errs, therefore, when she says that reform of abortion laws is "analogous to reform of divorce legislation or the repeal of anti-birth control statutes." This would be true only if it can be shown that abortion does not destroy a human life, and the burden of proof rests on those who say it does not. Until it can be clearly established that the fetus is not human, aborting it is unjustifiable. Meanwhile, anyone who be-

lieves that abortion is or may be the destruction of a human life has not only a right but a duty to oppose its legalization.

THOMAS LICKONA

Money and Vietnam

Staten Island, N.Y.

To the Editor: Your editorial of May 6 which conjectured on the amount of money being spent in Vietnam showed the irrelevancy of the American war effort there and the waste of money which could be used for good purposes elsewhere. . . .

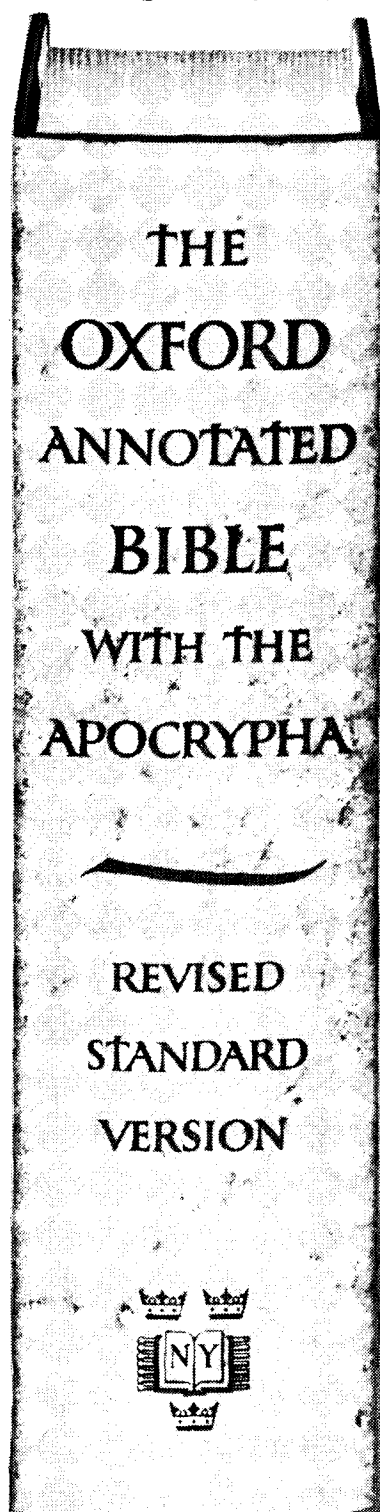
The \$21 billion spent in Vietnam could build 2 million homes at \$10,000 per home, taking care of approximately 10 million deprived people living in sub-standard houses. . . .

The fact that you mentioned foreign aid as a comparison of the amount of money expended on war in Vietnam would imply a priority of foreign aid over that of domestic assistance. There is no priority in charity, justice or in the conception that unless we give foreign aid on a large scale we will be engulfed by the undeveloped peoples of Africa, Asia, et al. The reality of African force is manifest in Rhodesia; and the inability of India and Pakistan to carry on even limited war beyond a few weeks was shown a short time ago. American military assistance has gone in large measure to those very countries who have engaged in or threatened war over the past few years—Egypt and Israel; India and Pakistan; Greece and Turkey. Without American military aid, or Russian aid, they would not have been capable of projecting such a posture in the first place. . . .

Our first job should be to attempt to bring the American system of social services and medical services, housing, hospital and dental care for children, pre-natal care for women, psychiatric care and care for the aged up to par with the very best of the developed countries of Western Europe. Then we should spend billions to attempt to bring the undeveloped nations to a point of integument that all of our people have reached—even the meanest.

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